

Under Fire

By RICHARD PARKER

Based on the drama of
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Author of "Under Cover" and co-author
of "It Pays to Advertise"

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SYNOPSIS.

The chief characters are Ethel Willoughby, Henry Streetman and Capt. Larry Redmond. The minor characters are Sir George Wagstaff of the British admiralty and Charles Brown, a New York newspaper correspondent. Ethel, a resident of Sir George's household, secretly married to Streetman, a German spy, though she did not know him as such. Captain Redmond, her old lover, returns to England after long absence. From him she learns the truth about Streetman; furthermore, that he has betrayed her simply to learn naval secrets. The European war breaks out. Ethel prepares to accompany Streetman to Brussels as a German spy in order to get revenge and serve England. Captain Redmond, Ethel and Charlie Brown turn up at a Belgian inn as the German army comes.

Here is a big opportunity for Charlie Brown, the New York newspaper correspondent, to show either a world of good sense or a state of mind bordering on insanity. The problem is up to him—whether he will stick by his friends, no matter what occurs, or consider the safety of his own person. There is a big thrill in this installment. It describes the meeting and planning of spies.

CHAPTER XII—Continued.

Ethel consented to the arrangement. She was immensely relieved that the quick-witted journalist so readily accepted her alias.

"Good, good!" their delighted host exclaimed. "Sweet consomme, eh? Boiled chicken, an artichoke, a bit of salad, and some coffee—real American coffee, without chicory, eh, m'sieu? He was already edging toward the door that

over perpetual

ories of his two guests

"Great! Sounds

Brown rejoined with

"Yes, m'sieu—immense!

your good American word.

shall serve such a dinner as the La

d'Or never has seen before!" And

Henri disappeared in high spirits.

After the depressing dullness of the

past weeks it was indeed exhilarating

to minister to two appreciative pa-

trons.

By the time Christophe had van-

ished Ethel Willoughby had quite re-

covered her self-possession. And when

Charlie Brown turned to her with a

look of inquiry upon his face she was

ready to meet his scrutiny with a stout

heart.

"You seem surprised—and quite nat-

urally," she said, "at hearing that man

call me Madame de Lorde."

"Well, that afternoon I knew you

as Miss Willoughby," he replied.

"But I was then Madame de Lorde,"

Ethel explained glibly. "You see, Mr.

Brown, I'd been married secretly."

"Secretly?"

"There were reasons—good reasons,"

she rejoined. "I could not ex-

plain what they were then; nor can I

now."

"Surely—surely!" he acquiesced, for

he had not the slightest desire to pry

into her private affairs. "But what

on earth are you doing in this dead-

and-alive spot?" And then, in the next

breath, he exclaimed, as a sudden in-

spiration came to him, "Oh, by George!

How dull of me! You're honeymoon-

ing, of course!"

"Not exactly!" Ethel replied, just a

bit lamely, perhaps. "My husband

isn't here—just now. He had some

business in Brussels, but I came on

ahead."

She had, indeed, left Streetman in

the Belgian capital. "Shall you be

staying long?" she asked Mr. Brown.

"No! I'm off in the morning," he

informed her.

The information relieved her vastly.

She had not relished the thought of

having to confess to the American that

Monsieur de Lorde was no other than

his erstwhile acquaintance of the tea

party—Henry Streetman. But as a

spy in his majesty's service, Ethel took

as easily to subterfuge as a duck to

water. She surprised herself often by

the readiness with which plausible

tales sprang to her lips.

"Oh! Then you won't be able to

meet Monsieur de Lorde," she said

with a note of regret. "I don't expect

him till tomorrow."

Charlie Brown murmured his regret

at that circumstance.

"But what are you doing here?" Ethel asked him then. "Perhaps you've a secret in your past too?" she added

gayly.

But Mr. Brown could lay claim to no such romantic excuse.

"Oh, I came over looking for a war,"

he explained.

"And you haven't found it?"

"Nothing like it at all!" he replied.

"The day after I saw you I got a

straight tip to beat it for Belgium. I

bought you one-and-a-half cylinder

1846 bicycle, and I've pedaled away for

three days, till I feel all legs and back.

My right name, this minute, is George

W. Achewell!" And Charlie Brown

sat down by the table upon which Ma-

dame de Lorde was resting her trim

elbow.

"Mr. Brown," Ethel said, "you're not

English. I am; but you are an Anglo-

Saxon, and you must sympathize with

the allies."

"Sure I do!" was his prompt re-

sponse.

"Then, whatever happens while

you're here," she continued with an air

of great earnestness, "whatever hap-

pens, I want you to remember that I

am English, and that it is England I

serve always. . . . You will believe

it?"

"Oh, of course I will!" he assured

her. And immediately a thought came

into Charlie Brown's head that made

him start. "And by the way," he said,

"while I think of it, I want to warn

you about that chap I met at tea at

your place. Streetman, he called him-

self. You remember him?"

To hide her confusion Ethel rose and

moved a few steps away from the

table.

"Yes, I remember him very well,"

she answered.

"I happened that night to get some

dope on him," Charlie went on, in en-

tire innocence of the effect his words

had upon her. "He's what you might

call a professional spy—working for

the German secret service now. That's

why he stuck up for them that after-

noon; but really he's a Russian."

"A Russian!" Ethel exclaimed, start-

led, in spite of herself, by that sur-

prising news.

"Yes," he continued. "He got kicked

out of Russia ten years ago for some

dirty business. Then he worked for

the English against the Boers. They

couldn't stand him either—he's an aw-

ful rotter. I don't know much about

him after that. Now he's with the

Germans. You . . . my

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been on the scene in your

viewed so many people, we see

much of human nature, that I know

pretty well when to print a story and

when to kill it—and I'll go through for

you any way you want me to."

Ethel turned to him impulsively,

gratefully.

"Thank you—you're a dear!" she

told him.

And at that moment the French spy

—he of the newspaper—returned.

And, paying scant heed, apparently,

to Ethel and her companion, he sat

down at a table, lighted another cigar-

rette, and resumed his intent reading

once more.

As soon as he caught sight of the

stranger Charlie Brown turned Ethel

with a quick "Ssh!"

"It must be nearly time for dinner,"

Madame de Lorde remarked carelessly,

as if their conversation bore only upon

trivial matters.

"That's so. And if we're going to

dine together I think I'll go wash up—

or the folks will think I belong here,"

Mr. Brown said, glancing down at the

wreck of his once immaculate new

English suit. "Oh, I almost forgot my

vanity bag!" he exclaimed. And he

retrieved his paper parcel from the

table where he had dropped it. Then

he went joyfully to his room.

CHAPTER XIII.

Der Tag.

Meanwhile Ethel Willoughby, alias

Madame de Lorde, strolled aimlessly

to the cigar counter and leaned neg-

ligently against it. Her feelings were

decidedly mixed—compounded of plea-

sure and uneasiness. As it turned out,

she found it agreeable to meet Mr.

Brown. It was a distinct relief to be

able to talk to someone against whom

she was under no necessity of being

on her guard. But at the same time, a

matter of business had brought her to

Courvoisier, and the inn. To be sure,

Streetman expected to join her there

later. But in the meantime Ethel ex-

pected to meet someone else first. Who

that person might be she did not know,

except that she unknown was a spy

in the service of the French.

No sooner did he find himself alone

with Ethel than the little Frenchman

dropped his paper.

"Bonjour, madame!" he said.

"I beg your pardon!" Ethel said.

"Do not look around—stay where

you are!" the stranger told her crisply.

All at once it occurred to her that

this somewhat inferior-looking indi-

vidual might be he whom she sought.

But she could not be sure. And she

resolved to bide her time.

"Really, sir," she said, with assumed

hauteur, "I beg you to explain this

mystery—this—"

"Mystery—" he took the word out

of her mouth—"shall we say rather

the mystery of General Jacques," he

corrected her politely.

"Oh, you are—"

"A friend of France! . . . And

your password?" He waited for her

to supply the mystic word.

"Courvoisier!" she said in a low

voice.

"Good!" he exclaimed with satisfac-

tion. "The other day to General

Jacques at the fort you offered your

services for France," he ventured.

"Yes!"

"He wishes now to take advantage

of your offer."

"I am ready," she answered quietly.

He proceeded swiftly to the busi-

ness in hand.

"The Germans will be here tonight,

and here the road forks, one turn to

the right, the other to the left—you

know?"

"It is important, the general says,

that he should know which road the

Germans take—whence comes the at-

tack. . . . You are to inform him

by telephone."

"But they will cut the wires," Ethel

objected.

"All that they can find," he agreed.

"But last night, while the others slept,

we have strung a wire from the fort

to—that chimney!" By the merest nod

he indicated the huge fireplace that

projected into the room.

"Here?" she exclaimed.

He bowed.

"I have beneath my coat a tele-

phone," he continued hurriedly. "If

madame will be good enough to change

places with me and keep watch, while

I connect the instrument, the affair

will be simple."

"Of course!" Ethel responded.

The Frenchman stole to the fireplace

and crept inside the wide opening.

And while his head and shoulders

vanished momentarily up the chimney

he busied himself with his work of at-

taching the instrument to the dangling

wire within.

"All is well?" he called in a low

voice, as his deft fingers twisted the

of the wire.

And he had

to take his departure when

a sudden hail. "Now may I ask you

are Madame de Lorde?" he inquired

his quaint English.

"Yes!"

"Now it is perhaps best that you be

told," he continued. "Before

you came a gentleman in the service

of your country, a gentleman who met